

# HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)  
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TWO ANNAS

## NAI TALIM OR BASIC EDUCATION

(By Vinoba)

[From a speech delivered before teachers at Rajsunakhala in Orissa on 17-4-'55]

Recently the Avadi Session of the Indian National Congress passed a resolution on Nai Talim. Pandit Nehru himself proposed the resolution. It says that Basic Education will be adopted by Government as its system of education at the end of ten years. It follows, therefore, that the Nai Talim schools conducted today should be model institutions of Basic Education. Only then could the expectations they raise be fulfilled and the whole of India would follow their example. Otherwise, after ten years the Government basic schools will profess one thing and do another. As it is, schools which are called basic-biased schools are so conducted that they resemble the man-lion incarnation of Vishnu neither fully human nor fully animal; they are not completely one thing, nor completely the other. It is, therefore, of the highest importance that we develop and run some model Basic Education schools. But before we started on our task we must have absolute clarity in our minds as to what Nai Talim or Basic Education means.

Many believe that if boys are taught a smattering of craft, and if they are made to do a little spinning on the wheel you have Basic Education. Some others believe that if less attention is paid to learning and knowledge you have Nai Talim. And there are still others who feel that once the process of learning is somehow associated with hand-work you have complete Basic Education. They do not bother themselves whether the association is natural; they do not feel this aspect of the question deserves much attention.

All these three views are faulty. The purpose of Nai Talim will not be served by teaching students a little of some craft. Boys and girls receiving their education through Nai Talim will be so proficient in their crafts that they will perform their work as easily and naturally as fish swim in water.

I understand that students receive here some money by way of scholarships. What we should aim at, however, is that during the last four months of their studies, students will earn enough

by working four hours a day that they can forego the money they get as scholarships. If they prove incapable of doing so it would mean that the craft or industry they have been taught is useless and that they will not engage themselves in it after leaving school. Let us suppose students are being trained in the art of war in this school. But suppose also that it has been so taught that none of the students who go out from here engage in war depending on the art they have acquired. What use then would such knowledge be? Our boys and girls should acquire such confidence and proficiency as to be able to earn their livelihood by working four hours in a day at the craft they have learnt. Our purpose will not be served by our students learning merely a little spinning and a little weaving just to be able to provide samples when called upon to do so.

Some people may argue that they have no need to be experts at their crafts as they have after all to teach in school. We know the mother teaches the child how to feed itself. Once the child learns how to eat we do not argue that now it has no need to feed itself. It is not enough for the child to learn how to eat. A human being should get its food everyday of its life. Just as eating is a matter of daily practice for man four hours of labour everyday should be the daily habit of teachers and students of Basic Education. They should be so proficient at their respective crafts that the peasants and carpenters of the village will go to them to learn them. They should also acquire the art of improving the instruments and tools they work with. They should become masters of the art of tilling land. As it is, our village industries and crafts have been destroyed. We seek to restore them through Nai Talim.

We dare not neglect knowledge because Basic Education does not recognize the importance of books. It is generally believed that in Nai Talim only that much knowledge which the student acquires naturally and as a matter of course is sufficient for him. But this idea is totally misleading. Through Basic Education students should learn all things which are basic to life. It is, of course, not necessary for students to learn lengthy accounts of history and cram lists of names of useless kings. That imposes

purposeless burden on the minds of students. But it is absolutely essential that boys acquire a thorough knowledge of the ideas which are basic to life and which lead to its development and progress. Knowledge of philosophy, religious thought and moral ideals is necessary. Knowledge of sociology, of the entire history of human society, and of such other subjects is essential. Students should receive the knowledge of the peculiarities of our social development as well as of those of others. Boys should be familiar with the basic concepts of science. They should acquire the highest knowledge of the science of health, of dietetics, of sanitation, of the art and science of cooking food etc. Thus there should not be any want of knowledge in Nai Talim. Boys and girls who are taught through the method of Basic Education should become experts in the use of language. They ought to learn the art of expressing their thoughts and ideas properly and effectively. Their hand-writing should be good and beautiful. They should also be conversant with literature. Thus there should not be any shortcomings in knowledge in our system of education which is named Nai Talim. Of course, there will be no place for useless knowledge in it.

A useless burden is imposed on the minds of students without any purpose in the universities of today and then they say that those who secure thirty-three per cent of marks will be deemed to have passed their examinations. This clearly means that they have made a provision beforehand for students to forget sixty-seven per cent of the knowledge they are supposed to have received! Truly speaking knowledge has to be retained hundred per cent. Who will engage a cook who prepares bread which is eighty per cent good? So too, knowledge, even a little short of perfection, cannot be allowed to pass off as such. Either you have knowledge or you do not have it; you have either sixteen annas of it in a rupee or you do not have it at all. Could we say that a man is eighty per cent alive and twenty per cent dead? If he is alive he is hundred per cent alive and if dead he is hundred per cent so. He is either fully alive or completely dead. There is no place for percentages here. So, too, there cannot be any percentages in knowledge. Knowledge has to be full and definite. Doubtful knowledge is no knowledge. But our universities have kept a provision for forgetting sixty-seven per cent of the knowledge students are supposed to acquire. This is because the universities also know that most of the knowledge they profess to impart is worthless.

Now, there will be no provision for forgetting the knowledge acquired through Nai Talim. Whatever will be taught will all be worth retaining and the student also will retain the whole of it because it will be useful to him in life. Really speaking man does not forget what he has secured as knowledge and that which he forgets or does not retain is not knowledge. So, we will impart

such knowledge through Basic Education as will not be forgotten. Nai Talim should be able to give us men of great knowledge.

Now let us take up the question of associating knowledge with work. Co-relation is the word used in this connection. The word we have adopted is *samavaya*. When I first heard the English word I wondered what it was. Buniyadi Talim is a system of education which we have conceived to suit our conditions. No *Sahab* had done it for us. So there was no responsibility on us to translate the word in their language. We are told by the friends who have brought the word to us that there is a system of education in the West which has adopted the word. But we do not want to borrow anyone else's method or system. We are developing an educational system of our own. Therefore, there is no need for us to use this English word to indicate what we seek to do. What we seek to do is *samavaya*. Let me explain.

The two things earth and the pot are so closely associated that it is difficult to define the relation between earth out of which the pot is made and the pot itself. Are earth and the pot two distinct objects or are they but one? Now if you were to tell me that they are two distinct things I would ask you to take away your pot and leave my earth to me. But the two objects are so interrelated that they cannot be separated. When you have earth you have the pot also. But if you were to tell me that both are one, please allow me to ask you to fill water in earth which is before us. Now, that too is impossible to do. All this argument boils down to this that the two things are so interwoven that you cannot demonstrate their distinct identities separately nor can you demonstrate that they are but one object. Thus, where you cannot decide about a relation whether it is a duality or an identity you have the *samavaya* relationship. In our Basic Education method you will have the *samavaya* of knowledge and hand-work; we will not be able to demonstrate at any particular moment whether the process going on is one of knowledge or one of work.

That will be our method. When Ramachandra went along with Vishvamitra to the latter's *ashram* he defended the sacrifice which was going on and he also acquired knowledge at the same time. Thus Ramachandra performed the work of defending the sacrifice and also acquired knowledge along with it naturally and as a matter of course. In our system we are thus not going to separate knowledge and work into two distinct processes. When the process of acquiring knowledge is on, the process of work is on too, and when the process of work is on, the process of knowledge is also operating. Work and knowledge will be so interwoven that there will be no need to establish a co-relation of any kind between the two. There will be no scope

for receiving knowledge from some outside agency. Knowledge will develop through hand-work and the student will receive his training in hand-work through knowledge. This, in short, is our system. A system where knowledge and work are stitched into one sheet will not be our system of education. In our method knowledge and hand-work will be interwoven into one single sheet.

I have till now spoken about the misconceptions regarding Nai Talim which are prevalent. I shall now tell you about a very important aspect of the problem. You cannot impart Basic Education and also hope to make the present social order permanent. Nai Talim is in complete opposition to the prevailing socio-economic system. If it is said that Basic Education is but one method of teaching whereby children are taught various subjects through the medium of hand-work it is entirely a mistake. Nai Talim or New Education cannot but create a new social order. It cannot live unless it did so. Nai Talim cannot find its place in the current social order nor can disparities in the salaries of teachers, or the custom of determining salaries by the different academic degrees of the teachers be allowed in it. And if there were unequal salaries for teachers under Nai Talim how could the State be revolutionized? In the machinery of the State as it is constituted today salaries are given on the basis of educational qualifications and besides there are various grades. Nai Talim will undo all this. If Nai Talim is not opposed to all these evils and if it is not capable of remedying them it will surely not deserve the name. Under Nai Talim the moral and economic position of physical and intellectual labour will be deemed equal and there will not be any grades or divisions on the basis of educational qualifications. The status of all work will be deemed equal. This is to say that we have to change the whole economic order of the day. And Nai Talim is here to bring about the change.

(From Hindi)

By D. G. Tendulkar

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## COMPULSORY INOCULATION AND INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM

To  
The Editor,  
Sir,

Coercive laws for vaccination and inoculation, which are evidently unconstitutional, are being still enforced on the ground that those that are not treated are a danger to the rest. Are they? Competent authorities are quoted in the Petition by 24 British Doctors to our Governments to show that this claim is nonsensical. This is being confirmed from day to day. If it be understood that all these procedures alike consist in giving an actual disease to prevent a remotely likely disease, then any evidence bearing on any one of these will be relevant as against all of them. Today in the *Hindu* I read news that a mother of two children vaccinated with the Salk Anti-Polio Vaccine contracted polio and died within 24 hours. This means that it is the vaccinated that are a danger to the unvaccinated, while on the other hand there is no proof offered for the official medical claim that the unvaccinated are a danger. The medical claim rests on unproved dogmas. It is irreconcilable with the findings of up-to-date science, that all disease is traceable to the defects of civilized nutrition. Dr. McCarrison and Sir Albert Howard have helped to confirm this strictly hygienic teaching. There is also no guarantee that there is no risk to health and life and that there will be real immunity. In a real democracy this coercion is criminal and the advisers of Governments can be proceeded against for these misdeeds. We should ask, are these Governments entitled to cause risk of death to individuals in order to confer a hypothetical immunity on others?

Also, are our Governments free from the moral obligation to tell the whole truth before obtaining the consent of parents, where the process is not compulsory? If so, they are not our Governments!

Pudukkottai, 7-6-'55

K. L. Sarma

[It is a basic truism of jurisprudence that so long as one is not proved to be guilty, he must be held to be innocent. The law applies here also. So long as one is not suffering from a contagious disease, he is not a danger. To inoculate one, therefore, on the ground that one is liable to suffer is violating the sanctity of the human body and the individual freedom of man. *Compulsory* vaccination therefore is a horrible outrage still prevalent in our country. This must be made voluntary by suitable amendment of the Act.

The B.C.G. campaign and such others in the name of doubtful science are similarly chargeable of such violation. For Government to take them up is unwarranted and utterly one-sided and wrong. The Government should rather concentrate on hygiene and sanitation and such other natural preventive means. I very much fear that what goes on in the name of *preventive* medicine is more or less trading on fear complex which is being provoked by interested parties. Government cannot resort to its coercive powers to inject in us a thing about which medical opinion even is keenly divided.

10-6-'55

M. P. J

# HARIJAN

June 18

1955

## OUR GREATEST KEY INDUSTRY

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

Shri Kher speaking to the A-I. Primary Teachers Conference, Puri, last month, made a cryptic remark about the state of educational reform in our country, which focuses our attention to a serious defect in India's system of education. This is what he said,

"We must not shut our eyes to the fact that primary schools in rural areas are bound to be different. We have so far been ignoring this fact, and our reforms in education are conceived and framed *not only by city people but for city people.*" (italics mine)

This charge about city bias in our ways of educational reform may be illustrated even from the latest document, viz. the Secondary Education Commission Report. Its conservative or near reactionary attitude and approach to the question of teaching English in Senior Primary Schools has already been noted in these columns before. This attitude was only due to the bias of our so-called reformers in favour of cities and city dwellers. Another instance can be given from its main recommendation regarding multi-purpose high schools.

This recommendation envisages alternative courses to suit various types of students. Queerly enough these courses are mainly for urban employment; they do not include village handicrafts as one of the major alternatives pre-eminently suitable for rural high schools in particular. We know the place of importance that these industries are securing for themselves in the planned economy of our country. Their sheer merit is so compelling that it is asserting itself in our economic thought in spite of the irrational prejudice that the learned harbour against them. Therefore, in the immediate future, the country will be requiring thousands of young men and women equipped with adequate know-how so as to man the services that will be set up at village level and upwards.

The Community Projects and the National Extension Service Schemes till now did not take up village industries in their programme—another instance of the urban bias of the educated few who frame, guide and administer the Plan today. Fortunately, they have now undertaken to mind them and the Second Plan proposes to give some place to these industries under the aegis of the Khadi Board. The unfortunate position that we find ourselves in today is that the educational system does not turn out enough trained men to take up these new but simple undertakings. If we had worked Basic and Post-Basic Education with even nodding faith, sincerity and requisite courage, the conditions

would have been quite different. However, it is never too late to mend.

If we probe deeper in this matter of urban bias of educational reform, we would find that it is really not a mere geographical thing; it is really speaking a distinction in the class structure of our society brought about by the English educational system: It is a question of the classes vs. the masses.

English education in India created a class of English-knowing people who mainly employed themselves in the governance of the country. The educational system that evolved itself under foreign rule mainly catered to this need of English rule. This, in course of a few decades, changed the entire face of our indigenous educational system. Values educational and cultural began to change, giving rise to a middle class trained enough under the new system to be employed in Government services. What should be the education of the whole people automatically changed to be mere instruction of the few for professional careers.

Naturally this state of affairs entirely changed our educational and cultural values also, giving a class bias to the system. Fundamental education of our people which was going on through ages as a self-governing activity of the people themselves, under the stress of this new order or changed values, also got disturbed. This system which secured to the people about 80 per cent of literacy and more turned the other way round and we have had the most pathetic situation wherein 80 per cent and more are illiterate and the rest are so trained that they are rendered almost incapable to be helpful in rebuilding our economy. The 80 per cent became the 'hewers of wood and drawers of water' not only of the foreign rulers but also of the English educated 10 per cent who aided them. Rather, as the President said a few weeks ago, the 10 per cent now tend to swell the ranks of "educated unemployment".

It is the product of this out-of-date system of education continuing as it was, which still controls our educational reform, administration and machinery and hence the obvious happens, viz. "our reforms in education are conceived and framed not only by city people (i.e. the classes which are the product of English education, now growing out-of-date and anti-national) but for city people." Unless this state of affairs is now boldly challenged by our people to improve and amend itself, no sound or stable progress in any really democratic planning worth the name seems to be possible.

It must be noted that education is the greatest and largest living industry of a people. It is of such a nature that it cannot be plied like material heavy industries with the help of money and machine mainly and with men sparingly. Man is pre-eminent here and he uses money to suit live needs. The next Plan should pay more attention

to this, at least as much as is being paid to the so-called heavy or key industries, because Education is ever the most important and vital key industry of a people.

12-6-'55

### THE NEW BHOODAN SLOGAN

(By D. D. Mundada)

The other day Vinoba was in the village of Akili, in a remote corner of Ganjam district. Shri Dharmaraj Naik, the head of the village, according a hearty welcome to Vinobaji, narrated how his idea of a village family appealed to him and his fellow villagers :

"Originally, our village did live as one family. But our economy was disturbed in the British regime and artificial divisions and differences were created. We have achieved Swaraj through Gandhiji's efforts and now we heard of you and your mission and were told that you were moving from village to village distributing land to the landless and preaching that land like air, water and sun was a divine gift and did not belong to any one individual. We find a universal appeal in your message and have preferred to redistribute our land in all the families of the village whether with or without land. Please bless us on this occasion and guide us for the future."

And one after another, all the thirtyone families of the village received Praman-Patras of land, each according to his family's needs. Shri Dharmaraj Naik who owned fifteen acres, maximum holding of the village, now received only ten, the number of his family members being the same. Those who had no land or had very little received according to their family members one acre per head. Thus 142 acres which once were the property of but fifteen landholders individually were now redistributed among all the hundred members of the village family, the village Panchayat to function as the trustee of the land — entitled to assess the same periodically, say after ten years to make adjustments according to the needs of the families. Fortytwo acres were left for collective farming. It was the first occasion that Vinobaji was thus called upon to distribute total land of a village. Four years ago, in Kanpur district he performed the first distribution. But that was not for *villagization* as the one referred to herein. He was, therefore, visibly moved by the event.

Referring to Rajaji's remarks that Bhoodan prompted people towards the path of Bhakti and revived faith in God, he pointed out how it not only led to that path, but brought its very fruit, the realization of the Lord. How could the villagers otherwise rise above their ego — *ahankaar* and drown their differences and surrender their sense of ownership by donating their total land to Vinobaji? Were they very learned persons? They had not known the three R's, all of them being either Harijans or Adivasis. Maybe, for this very reason, their hearts are more receptive and they react more promptly to the call of the age. Is it not a challenge to the intelligentsia and

to the more favoured? And to support his statement as it were, came the news that Ranikhama also decided to donate all its land in Bhoodan. What had happened to the villagers of Ranikhama? In the morning, when the village Naik was introduced to Vinoba at that village, it was told that not an inch of land was received there due to the indifference of the Naik. Vinobaji, touching the latter's shoulder most affectionately, had asked him if he would co-operate in collecting land for the landless. And had come the prompt reply — "Why not?" Since then the villagers sat and discussed and the Naik gave the lead. They had now known that Vinoba was going to perform the redistribution of total land at Akili. They sat and rose with their resolve as was conveyed and announced during the function at Akili.

The news had spread like fire that the villagers of Akili and Ranikhama had donated all their lands. Villagers who came from surrounding villages had witnessed the ceremonial distribution and the logic of fact as explained in Vinoba's speech, could not but appeal to their minds and talents and they were convinced that it was now essential to think in terms of a whole village than to think as individuals.

And when next morning Vinoba left for the next halt, the landholders of Kusumpur, a village on the way, gathered on the roadside and offered him flowers. Vinoba who never hinders his march on the way, looking at the eager eyes of the villagers, chose to stop for a while and asked if they had to say anything. Within a couple of sentences, he also explained his message of *villagization* and asked if they had attended yesterday's function and, if so, whether they had applied their minds to the implications of the event. And the Naik, with glitter in his eyes, replied in the affirmative and said that they had decided to donate all their land. And in this way, more than hundred and fifty villages have till now donated all their lands in Bhoodan. Every day is bringing new additions to the list.

A new slogan has come to stay. Till now, they used to say: 'There will be no landless person in our village'. But now they say: 'There will be no landowner in our village!'

A unique revolution is afoot in this remote corner of the world. New values are being established. We are witnessing the birth of a new society based on equality, fraternity and social justice. It is in these villages now that we should be able to present a picture of proper planning for the people. It is in these villages that a model of self-sufficient economy could be built, that basic needs of a villager such as cloth, education and justice etc., are provided in the village itself, that all finished goods needed for the village are manufactured from the raw materials produced in the village.

23-5-'55

## LAND AND MAN

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

"We persuade everyone to realize that every landless person should receive land and that is the basic concept of the Bhoodan Yajna. The movement is being looked at from various points of view. But to my mind the most significant of all of them is the fundamental moral idea underlying it. I have sometimes referred to it before, as for instance, in the Gaya Sammelan. I believe that of the fundamental rights of man one is his right to have land that would come to his share if he wanted to serve it. In a country where there is not enough land the share for every person would naturally be small. But he has a right to demand whatever it is. Just as every thirsty person has a right to get water, or every hungry person a right to get food, or just as every person is entitled to receive air to breathe, so too it is one of the fundamental rights of man to serve the soil. This is why I feel such immense enthusiasm for the Bhoodan Yajna. There are other reasons for it also. But I derive the greatest inspiration from the concept that it is a fundamental right of human life."

In these words Shri Vinoba expressed his belief in the Bhoodan in the prayer speech at Puri on 29-3-'55. Explaining the idea that man has not merely a fundamental right to land but has also a duty to it, he proceeded to say :

"It is the duty of every man to do his part in producing food. Where a different social order prevails man is not able to see this his duty to serve the land. But in an ideal socio-economic order man has not only a right to land but also a duty. In such an order working on land will be looked upon as the best form of physical exercise or labour. Occupied in his work on land man breathes pure air and has an opportunity to enjoy the rays of the sun and the vastness of the sky. He is able to enjoy all these elements that go to make life in the proper proportion. All the parts of his body get exercise. He is enabled to produce food. And along with all these worldly benefits he is able to see and share the process of sowing and producing food which is *brahmakarma* or the law underlying life in the universe.

"I therefore believe working on land is a form of worship. Just as it would be a crime to prohibit anyone from entering a place of worship, so too it is a big crime to make it impossible for anyone who wants to do it to serve the land. Working on land is the best means of worshipping God. It helps man a good deal to control his senses. That is how farming is helpful in the practice of *brahmacharya* that is chastity. Thus the occupation of farming may be viewed in many ways conducive to the advantage of man."

Discussing his social ideal from this point of view Shri Vinoba further pointed out :

"In an ideal socio-economic order these large cities will have no place. Every house will have some land attached to it and those who occupy it will work on it. In an ideal order every farm will have a well and everyone will serve the soil. Man will occupy himself in farming in order to fulfil his fourfold duty....."

"In an ideal social order everyone will have to labour for cleanliness along with farming. Work for keeping one's surroundings clean is a form of sacrifice *yajnakarma*. It is a big error to impose the work of cleanliness and sanitation on one particular class of human beings. Everyone should, as a matter of duty, share the work.

"One of the reasons why I feel enthusiasm for Bhoodan Yajna is that it is the duty of all men of all classes, even as telling truth is not the duty of Brahmanas only but of all the *varnas*. The study of the Vedas may be a duty assigned only to one *varna*, but it is the duty of all classes to acquire *brahmavidya*. Even so the work of tilling land is reckoned among the duties of every man of every *varna*. It cannot be the duty only of the peasant, it is the duty of all. Some people argue against giving land to every one on the ground that it would lead to fragmentation. But that to my mind is a minor problem. I am not here presenting an economic doctrine. To serve the land is one of the fundamental rights of man. Man can hope for happiness only when the right is recognized by all concerned."

The person who realizes his duty to land as explained above will surely get land for worshipping God by working on it. Saint Francis used to exhort his followers not to beg for food but to go and work on the fields of the peasants who lived in the surrounding area and eat what they might give. Great indeed is the importance of body labour for human society. Truly, when body labour performed by man is informed with truth and non-violence it takes the form of worship of God. Kabirji used to worship God through the labour of weaving cloth on the handloom. It is our human destiny to achieve such a high state of being by performing our ordinary human vocations in the spirit of truth and non-violence. To that end he must devote himself to the labour of production which is for the good of all beings and which conduces to the good of even the least among men. That is man's right, that is also his duty.

But everyone does not realize the duty. The six enemies that reside within the human mind (greed, passion, anger, malice etc.) trouble all of us more or less. The whole phenomenon of the human world is a consequence of their play. And it has to be vigilantly regulated to the end of securing an ordered social life.

Farming is an occupation. That is why man who is a social being generally stays in a place adopting it as his home. He almost implants him-

self in that place. He will not leave his society even if land is to be had elsewhere.

Observing the affairs of the world today we find that people belonging to one nation do not allow others who belong to another to enter their country. There is enough land, otherwise, for man on earth. But man has ordered his social life today in such a manner that we do not have enough land here in India while in Australia and such other places there is a profusion of it. People, however, are not allowed to migrate to them. And, besides, all would not wish to migrate to these places. The problem facing man is thus very complex and does not yield to an easy or simple solution. We seek to solve it not in the manner of the brute but in the way of man.

19-5-'55

(From Hindi)

### POLITICS AND RELIGION

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

The official organ of the War Resisters' International, England, in its Autumn 1954 and Spring 1955 Numbers 66-67 gives a detailed report of the Eighth Triennial Conference of that organization which was held in Paris in 1954. The major part of this Conference was devoted to a consideration of the Third Camp idea largely at the suggestion of the American Pacifist, A. J. Muste. Really speaking, it is the idea of carrying religion into politics,—of securing peace and happiness through love and non-violence.

#### 1

Mr Muste in his opening speech cleared that the Third Camp was no idea of creating a third bloc. "All who belonged to the Third Camp were opposed to military preparations of both the blocs. They disapproved of the atom bomb whether in the hands of the Pentagon or the Kremlin. The chief point to be noted regarding Third Camp idea is that the opposition extends to the socio-economic regimes and the cultures of totalitarian Communism and of American Capitalism, which both stimulated war preparation. The Third Camp stood for a new way of life with an emphasis on spiritual values and the subjection of technology to the service of man. It was more than neutralism. It stood for a more genuine and co-operative democracy."

At the end of his discourse A. J. Muste "warned against looking to the U.S.A. for leadership. European and other countries must be prepared to accept the responsibility of independence and of the creation of a new order in which the spiritual and the political were creatively integrated. Movements which were tending in the Third Camp direction must become corporately what Gandhi was, believing in non-violence at all costs, and through that belief generating the dynamism which would achieve practical results."

#### 2

The colonial and economic aspects of the Third Camp were discussed by Fenner Brockway,

the well-known English M.P. He said, "The Third Camp attitude was almost intuitive among the colonial peoples. Nehru represented the instinctive mind of the peoples of many Asian countries and of the African and Caribbean colonies."

He further declared that the "Third Camp movement must be associated with the social revolution of this century which was the social revolution of the colonial peoples. Two-thirds of the human race was engaged in the struggle for political liberty, human equality and education. They were not always adopting methods we could approve but increasingly they were thinking in terms of Gandhi's example, if only because of the overwhelming power opposed to them. These colonial peoples could become our greatest allies in the cause of peace."

#### 3

Asia was discussed in relation to the Third Camp idea. The chief speaker was Horace Alexander. He chiefly spoke about India. The first thing he said was to point out the special moral influence India was exercising in the world today due to Gandhiji. In this connection he remarked that "Nehru had great qualities but would be the first to agree that when he was able to express an effective moral voice on behalf of India, it was because he was in some sense reflecting the voice of Gandhi."

Discussing the economic aspect of the question Mr Alexander said that the West often found that Gandhiji did not fit into their Western categories. "Most of us represented the wealthier third of humanity and were anxious to raise the standard of living of the other two-thirds. Gandhiji's emphasis was always on self-help. When touring the villages of Bihar after the earthquake, he did not promise aid to the villagers but suggested things they could do for themselves. During the chaos of partition, he rejected the suggestion of an appeal to Western countries for funds to help the refugees. He insisted that this was a problem they must solve themselves with only such outside help as came in the form of unsolicited gifts."

Another point which he made in the Conference is noteworthy for us at present. We forget that Western Socialists and Socialist theories were primarily concerned with the industrial worker. Pointing this out Mr Alexander said, Gandhiji was primarily concerned with the peasant. "It might be inconvenient to do without modern mechanical contrivances, but no one could do without food. 'If we want to get a true harmonious community in the world we must build it on a real foundation and that real foundation is the soil.' That was one of the central themes of Gandhiji's teaching."

He said that Gandhiji had not been against all cities and machines but he did advocate decentralization so that men could live in communities of which they could feel effective members.

He described the Bhoodan movement of Shri Vinoba and asked whether that Indian experiment had any message for the West.

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This discussion was closed by a contribution from Shri J. C. Kumarappa. He explained some of the practical details of Gandhiji's non-violent economy. "Vinoba Bhave's land gift scheme was one aspect. The village industries was another. Agriculture, industry and administration must all be integrated into the new non-violent way of life. Government, wars and other things came in to obstruct that way of life. War was not an external evil, but a disease of society which must be eradicated. We were faced with the problem of sharing the good things of the world and the Western price-mechanism failed to do that equitably. A human basis of distribution must take its place.

"Discussion of pacifism and war was irrelevant until we had got rid of exploitation which necessitated war. The economics of exploitation as taught him at Columbia University had turned him to Gandhi, for it had revealed to him the evils of an economic system divorced from morals. We must learn to live as one family. This did not involve perfect equality. There could within limits be variations of income according to differences of production. Economic self-sufficiency for countries was some guarantee against exploitation and minimized the use of armed forces to defend trade routes. Only the surplus should go on to the international market after the needs of the people in the producing country had been met. At present food was exported from countries whose people were starving.

"No country could carry freedom to another: the attempt to do so involved war. To enjoy the results of exploitation was to bring war into our homes. Self-restraint and self-discipline spelled peace and indulgence spelled gangster economy."

5

Another interesting discussion at the Conference was about the religious aspects of the Third Camp, which was introduced by Andre Trocme. It was a discussion on the burning question of politics and religion. Andre Trocme said that the realm of politics was that of power and that of religion was truth. They were distinct and religion could have nothing to do with power politics. But he said that there was a small area where the two spheres overlapped and where, therefore, religious people could be active. This common ground was mainly that of liberation from capitalism and totalitarianism. This involved contact with political movements.

Another speaker emphasized that religion and politics were both parts of education and we must seek to harmonize them in the educational process. Those who know the Gandhian idea of basic education know how it chiefly aims to achieve this harmony.

Andre Trocme concluded the discussion wherein he emphasized the difficulties in which

religious people found themselves when they associated with political movements. Pacifists could not obtain political power except by an alliance with Non-pacifists which means acceptance of the methods of authority or the use of power and police etc. and which would cease to be religious except in oppressive and fanatical way. However, the speaker said there was a way to be effective even with the use of power. He said Gandhiji's methods of non-co-operation and economic independence show the way here. Unless we trained ourselves to act along Gandhiji's lines—and Gandhiji carried religion into politics—he said he should end up in the Communist party or in a monastery.

Constructive workers, I hope, will find much food for thought and meditation from the above short account of W.R.I. Conference.

28-5-55

### Tainted Money

*The Times of India* gives the following news from Bangalore, June 7, in its issue of 8-6-55:

"The Mysore Government has conveyed its views to the Centre on the proposed legislation to control cross-word competitions.....Asked whether he was in favour of banning cross-words, he (the Law Minister Mr A. G. Ramachandra Rao) said that if the suggestion was accepted then several other things including horse-racing would have to be prohibited."

It is good to see that the Minister tries to be consistent in thinking out policies for his State. The point is whether these agreeably objectionable activities require to be controlled or banned. It is more relevant, therefore, to know the Minister's mind here. And it is in this connection that he is reported to have made an alarming statement. As the above press news item concludes:

"He said that 'we have to put up for some time with these bad things' in order to raise money for good purposes."

There are many other bad things also that can give tainted money which can be put to 'good' (?) purposes. Is the Minister going to be consistent here also? We have been rather taught to see that tainted money itself is such an utterly bad thing that its giving up is a very good thing by itself. It is difficult therefore to agree with the Minister's doctrine that good can come out of evil that is allowed to persist by man knowingly and out of avarice.

12-6-55

M. P.

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